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CENTRAL INTELLIGENCE AGENCY
Directorate of Intelligence
9 February 1973

INTELLIGENCE MEMORANDUM

Uruguay

(Situation Report Number 1 - As of 3:00 PM EST)

1. President Bordaberry's position in his confrontation with the military has continued to deteriorate as the rebellious generals have stiffened their resolve to force Bordaberry to back down on the appointment of retired general Francese as defense minister. As long as the military remain adamant, Bordaberry's only way out would be to give in to the generals' demand that he dismiss Francese. This would surely mark Bordaberry as merely a puppet of the military, although he might save some face by accepting the collective resignation of the entire 11-member cabinet that was presented to him this morning. Contacts were made between the rebel generals and representatives of the military this morning in an apparent attempt to find a compromise solution.

2. The army has taken control of all radio and television stations in the capital and is using them exclusively to broadcast military communiques. The "army and air force commands" have again demanded that the President fire Defense Minister Francese and have issued a call for their comrades in the navy to join them. As of 1300 hours, however, the navy continued its support of the President and had sealed off the port area.

3. Most civilian political sectors have expressed their support for the President, but the Christian Democrats' newspaper--which usually speaks for the Frente Amplio, the principal leftist coalition--has sided with the military. The Communist-controlled labor confederation has announced that it will declare a general strike if the military seizes power. [Redacted Box]

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4. The army and air force have the power to overthrow President Bordaberry, even if the navy continues to support him. So far, however, the rebel leaders have focused only on forcing the removal of the defense minister. Their apparent willingness to negotiate earlier today indicates that they may be willing to step back from the brink if Bordaberry gives in to their demand. The armed forces do not appear to have a plan to govern and might well accept some solution that gave the military a direct voice in the government but retained a civilian at the top.